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TAGS: [ELAB](#) [PGOV](#) [SMIG](#) [SOCI](#) [IV](#)
SUBJECT: COTE D'IVOIRE ADOPTS PLAN AGAINST CHILD
TRAFFICKING AND LABOR

REF: ABIDJAN 1084

¶1. (SBU) Summary. The Government of Cote d'Ivoire has adopted a National Plan of Action Against Child Trafficking and Labor that will run from September 2007 through December 2009. The plan's overall objectives are: to adopt laws specifically prohibiting these practices, to determine the scope of the problem, and to take measures to prevent these practices and to reintegrate victims into society. Adoption of this plan demonstrates a strong commitment by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire to address and eradicate child trafficking and labor but will not in and of itself satisfy the Harkin-Engel Protocol. End Summary.

¶2. (U) The Government of Cote d'Ivoire adopted a National Plan of Action Against Child Trafficking and Labor in late September. The plan will run through December 2009. It states that child labor in Cote d'Ivoire occurs primarily in the agricultural and domestic labor sectors as well as in the informal urban economy. The plan notes that there has been no national study on trafficking and child labor except for a study of the cocoa industry conducted in 2002. Its objectives are: to strengthen the legal framework governing child trafficking and labor, to determine the extent of the problem, to establish measures to prevent such practices, to assist the educational system, to adopt a strategy to reintegrate victims in their families and society, and to create a mechanism to monitor the situation as well as the impact of actions taken to combat the problem. The government will partner with NGOs, civil society, and UNICEF to carry out the plan, which will cost USD 7.2 million.

¶3. (U) In order to strengthen the judicial framework, the plan provides for drafting, adoption, and dissemination of a law prohibiting trafficking of and dangerous work by children as well as adoption of the Rights of the Child and Palermo Conventions. To ascertain the scope of the problem, the National Institute of Statistics will conduct separate studies on trafficking of children and child labor. These will be followed by additional studies of both trafficking and child labor in the following specific fields: mining, industry, agriculture, commerce, transport, domestic work, and the urban economy.

¶4. (U) The plan provides that a manual will be drafted and disseminated providing procedures for removing victims from abusive environments. The scheme also includes rehabilitation of ten existing shelters and the construction of five new ones to provide refuge for victims. The victims will receive professional training and assistance for reinsertion into society. In locations where the problem of child trafficking is particularly acute, the government will provide new schools to help deter trafficking. The last phase of the program will consist of 4 workshops to evaluate the impact of

the plan's activities.

15. (SBU) Comment: Adoption of the plan indicates the commitment by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire to address and eradicate child trafficking and labor. The plan is detailed and government and civil society actors identified for each step. The weakest parts of the plan regard victims' professional training and reinsertion into society. The plan fails to provide details of how this will be carried out and its success is uncertain in a country where youth unemployment is high and the economy sluggish due to the political crisis. The plan will not in and of itself satisfy the Harkin-Engel Protocol. However, as the protocol deadline looms, the effectiveness of efforts such as this one will come under greater scrutiny.

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